

Summary
North Pacific Research Board
Federal Building
Juneau, AK
July 29-30, 2004

1. Call to Order/Approve Agenda

The Board convened at 1:15 p.m. on Thursday, July 29, 2004. Present were Tylan Schrock (by teleconference), Jim Balsiger, Lawson Brigham (for Garry Brass), Howard Horton, Earl Krygier (for Kevin Duffy), Stephanie Madsen, John Gauvin, Mark Guillory, Phil Mundy, Walter Parker, Pamela Pope, John Roos, Bill Seitz, Jev Shelton, and John White. Dr. Balsiger chaired the meeting. Robert Gisiner, Trevor McCabe, Robin Samuelsen and Stetson Tinkham were absent. Clarence Pautzke, Misty Ott, and Igor Katraev staffed the meeting.

The agenda was approved, as was the Board meeting summary for March 17-19, 2004. The Board received a report on the Pollock Conservation Cooperative Research Center and a written status report on Alaska Ocean Observing System.

2. Proposals for 2004

Forage Fish Proposal

In March 2004, the Board approved a Science Panel recommendation to combine three forage fish proposals (#1, #35, and #56) into one comprehensive study with total funding of \$500,000. A revised proposal was submitted by the principal investigators and reviewed by the Science Panel at its July meeting. The Science Panel recommended funding the revised project, noting that it is not intended to provide an assessment of forage fish, but rather to compare methodologies for doing such an assessment. The Panel commented that the concept and plan are good, the methods and sampling are described well, the budget is reasonable, and the team has very capable scientists. The Board approved the revised proposal (project #401) at the \$500,000 level.

Revised Arctic Synthesis Proposal

The 2004 RFP requested proposals for an Arctic synthesis targeted at the \$75,000 level. Three proposals were received, two at \$75,000, and one from LGL for \$191,000. In March the Science Panel recommended funding the LGL proposal, after negotiating it down to \$120,000. The Board in March recommended funding at \$150,000, with \$100,000 earmarked for personal services. The original proposal envisioned five synthesis papers on oceanography and climate, fish, marine mammals, seabirds, and habitats that would be the basis for an Anchorage workshop, which would review the syntheses and develop research recommendations. The synthesis papers, as revised, then would be submitted for publication in *Arctic*. In the interest of reducing costs, LGL noted that the workshop might be eliminated or postponed, that it was not critical to the synthesis, and if eliminated, would reduce costs to \$140,681 (from \$190,681). In the revised proposal, the synthesis was eliminated in favor of workshop proceedings. The applicants commented that “*a workshop, complete synthesis, and formal publication of the results as originally proposed is (sic) very time intensive and will not be possible given the budget limitations of the project.*” On the basis of the proposed revision, and the fact that it would still cost twice as much as the target \$75,000 announced in the RFP to produce less than was requested, the Board declined to fund the revised proposal and noted its intent to again place the research need in the 2005 RFP.

3. Review Draft Science Plan

The Board received a staff presentation on revisions made to the draft science plan since the March 2004 meeting. The Board also received comments from its Science Panel and Advisory Panel (available under “Meetings” at www.nprb.org). The Board received a presentation on capacity building from Dr. Joseph Spaeder, executive director of the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Sustainable Salmon Initiative. The Board then developed the following comments on the draft science plan. For convenience, they are referenced to sections of the revised draft plan dated September 3, 2004.

Chapter 2 – Scientific Foundations

Section 2.2.1.1 Atmospheric Climate Features (p. 13). Expand the explanation of the Pacific Decadal Oscillation and what a regime shift means. (Also, see expanded explanation of regime shifts in Section 2.2.2.3 (p. 25).)

Section 2.2.2.1 Concepts of Energy Flow (p. 23). Need to distinguish between fisheries management off Alaska, which has been held up as an example of sustainable management, and resource management in other parts of the world where fish stocks have been depleted. For Figure 2-8, note earlier citations for space and time scales.

Section 2.2.2.4 Human Impacts (p. 26). Explain better how trophic cascades may apply to marine ecosystems off Alaska. Explain that there have been positive management developments off Alaska, and add oil and gas development as a human-induced impact on the ecosystem.

Section 2.2.3 Human Dimensions (p. 28). Note that climate change may be the most important influence in terms of long-term impacts on changing the ecosystem.

Chapter 3 – Research Themes

Section 3.1 Introduction (p. 33)

Sections of Chapter 3 need to be consistent in structure as much as possible and appropriate, and there needs to be balance in the treatment of species. For example, attention to fish species needs to be elevated, while emphasis on marine mammals and seabirds needs to be reduced. There needs to be more emphasis on the differences between LMEs. Table 3-1 was found to be helpful, but the reader should be given an overview up front of the research strategies for each section, possibly at the beginning of the chapter. A better road map is needed of the whole chapter and an executive summary will be needed. The document should be augmented with additional citations as necessary to support opinions expressed.

Section 3.1.2.1 (p. 34). The description of monitoring should be enhanced with references to monitoring biological components, in addition to physical and chemical measurements.

Section 3.2 Lower Trophic Level Productivity (p. 39)

The questions for each of the regions should be consistent to the extent possible, but still inform the reader of issues unique to each region.

Section 3.3 Fish Habitat (p. 46)

More information needs to be added on State waters issues. Issues other than Magnuson-Stevens Act management-related concerns need to be identified, e.g., other types of human-induced habitat

degradation. Also explain that habitat should be studied for habitat sake, not solely for fisheries-related concerns. Revise section on fishing effects on habitat to remove references to pelagic trawls unless citations can be added supporting their deleterious impacts on benthic habitat.

Section 3.4 Fish and Invertebrates (p. 58)

Section 3.4.2.4 Arctic Ocean (p. 65). Note importance of overwintering habitat and river systems for cisco and other species.

Section 3.4.3.1 Overfished Stocks and Disaster Declarations (p. 66). Need to add more information on salmon stocks that have been designated by the State of Alaska as stocks of yield concern or of management concern, and also give more emphasis on decline of Kvichak system sockeye. Also add information on other fish stocks that are depleted in State waters. Note that some stock declines may have resulted from natural factors, not necessarily from overfishing. Add a separate section on halibut in the species descriptions.

3.5 Marine Mammals (p. 75)

Section 3.5.4 Research Needs (p. 81). Clearly identify where each list of research needs comes from and distinguish between those originating elsewhere and those that the Board has identified.

3.6 Seabirds (p. 86)

Section 3.6.2 Overview (p. 86). There needs to be additional discussion of barrier islands in Arctic and importance to sea ducks. Check reference on the additional 30 million seabirds that seasonally visit Alaska waters. Note problems of Emperor Geese due to exposure to selenium.

Section 3.6.3.1 Birds of Conservation Concern (p. 89). Determine if Marble murrelets should be included in the discussion.

Section 3.6.3.2 Direct Take and Fisheries Interactions (p. 91). Indicate that trawl warps also are a problem in bird strikes, in addition to third wire strikes, and that more research is being done on this. Note that vessels other than factory trawlers contribute to offal and discards.

Section 3.6.3.4 Predation (p. 92). Note shipwrecks as a source of rats.

3.7 Humans (p. 98)

It needs to be made clear that this section is talking about impacts on humans, and the section should be placed before the section on IERPs. Also need to have more references to recreational fisheries and in the table of research needs, list the impacts of precautionary management approach on communities.

3.8 Longer term issues

3.8.4 Invasive Species (p. 111). Need to add information on regulations and laws that govern use of broodstock that make invasive species less of an issue in that regard.

3.8.5 Aquaculture (p. 111). Note that aquaculture can add stresses to the carrying capacity of the marine ecosystem and impact wild stocks.

3.9 Integrated Ecosystem Research Programs (p. 115)

The general discussion was that the text needed to be revised to explain better why the research needs are circling back to LMEs after going through each of the ecosystems components, and why the LMEs are being split into subregions. Also, the text needs to note that these are examples of IERPs and that they will have better definition after synthesis meetings are held. Also, it needs to be explained better that the goal is integrated programs at the LME level, but pragmatically, subregions must be examined first.

Chapter 4 - Other Research Approaches and Partnerships

4.1 Local and Traditional Knowledge (p. 125)

Add reference to ecosystems in discussing the need for LTK in the introduction. Move the implementation steps to the implementation plan. Delete sentence on lines 23-25, p. 122 about discouraging half-hearted attempts to include LTK, etc.

4.2 Coordination (p. 128)

Rephrase section head to be coordination and partnerships with other entities and programs.

4.3 Cooperative Research (p. 129)

Make it clear that cooperative research could extend to non-fisheries commercial vessels.

4.4 Education, Outreach, and Community Involvement (p. 132)

Add more information on capacity building in general terms and provide some examples. There also was discussion of establishing a committee of members from the Advisory Panel, Science Panel, and Board to provide advice on implementing capacity building in 2005 and 2006. The committee would make site visits to successful programs, identify fiscal assistance and start developing options for new programs. Though it remained unresolved on how to move forward with next steps in capacity building, the general consensus was to add definitions of capacity building offered by Dr. Spaeder, cite examples, and acknowledge that it is in the developmental stage.

Chapter 5 - Policies and Procedures

5.2 Data Management (p. 137)

There should be less emphasis on following the National Science Foundation (NSF) in developing data management approaches for the Board as sometimes NSF is not up to date on current approaches. The Board needs to encourage data sharing and timely provision of data from researchers. There also needs to be a prohibition on discarding of samples or data. The principal investigators need to be required to keep samples and the decision of whether to discard them should be up to the Board.

5.3 Other Policy Issues (p. 143)

Standards for protecting intellectual property rights should apply to more than universities.

General Comments

- Add appendix with list of species and common names used in document
- Label document as “draft” when sent to NRC
- Ecosystems IERP needs to be last
- Place a research strategy section or table at the front of each section
- Balance level of detail and make sections as uniform as possible
- Filter out staff opinion
- Reduce focus on MSA
- Executive summary is needed with chart of research needs
- Add references to implementation plan.
- Add references to LMEs and organize by LMEs when describing species and issues to the extent appropriate. However, do not be redundant.

Draft Implementation Plan

The Board reviewed several draft documents that described initial steps that might be taken to implement components of the science plan. The following general comments were made on the individual sections, recognizing that additional work is needed on implementation in September, particularly regarding the immediate next steps for 2005 that will be incorporated in the 2005 request for proposals to be released on October 8, 2004.

Lower trophic levels

#1 – AOOS has too big a share and should be broken out from the lower trophic level line item. But when we do work in this area – it should be done through AOOS and AOOS work needs to extend all the way south to Dixon Entrance. AOOS could be placed under a general topic of ocean monitoring.

#2 – Add in Alliance for Coastal Technology and NOAA program for sensor development.

#7 – Ask GEM science director for briefing on nearshore mapping and other nearshore programs.

Fish and Invertebrates

Salmon issues need to be considered in areas other than in western Alaska. Many stocks are at all time highs and we need to know what set of conditions is contributing to that.

Expand crab to include Dungeness crab; add other state waters and managed fisheries.

Marine Mammals

#1 – Synthesis meeting on Steller sea lions needs to include all entities engaged in sea lion research, not just NMFS.

Seabirds

Some members suggested that there needed to be an RFP component for seabirds every year. Also, if there are synthesis meetings on tracking technologies, then the Coastal Alliance needs to be added.

IERP

An LME interdisciplinary team should be established to bring all IERP activities together.

4. Other Matters

- The Board voted against a motion to provide an honorarium for Science Panel members.
- The Board indicated it would wait until the spring 2005 meeting to fill the vacancy on the Advisory Panel left by Cora Crome's resignation.
- The Board will contact Senator Steven's staff to determine if he would be available to come to one of the Board's meetings for the official opening of the office in Anchorage.
- The Board will meet next in Anchorage on September 29-30, 2004, starting at 9 a.m. on September 29th.